

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

FOR NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

February 2004



January unemployment rates increase, as expected, but sometimes less than expected

January marked the fourth consecutive month in which **Adams County** reported below-typical unemployment rates. Encouragement from this trend is tempered by a counterbalancing trend: in eleven of the last twelve months, the county's job estimates were lower than the same month a year earlier. Compared to the previous year, this summer's construction growth was milder, as was its winter slowdown.

Since October, **Forest County**'s unemployment rate has been following its typical seasonal pattern more closely than it had in the first half of 2003. Since September, it has seen fewer jobs each month than the same month a year earlier. From May through December, leisure & hospitality job estimates were below their year-ago levels. Though sharp, this January's leisure & hospitality drop was much less severe than last January's.

Lan glade County has seen its unemployment rate gradually coming closer to typical levels since August, but overall job growth has not been robust. Manufacturing has continued to shed jobs: over the last twelve months, manufacturing job estimates have consistently been below their year-ago levels.

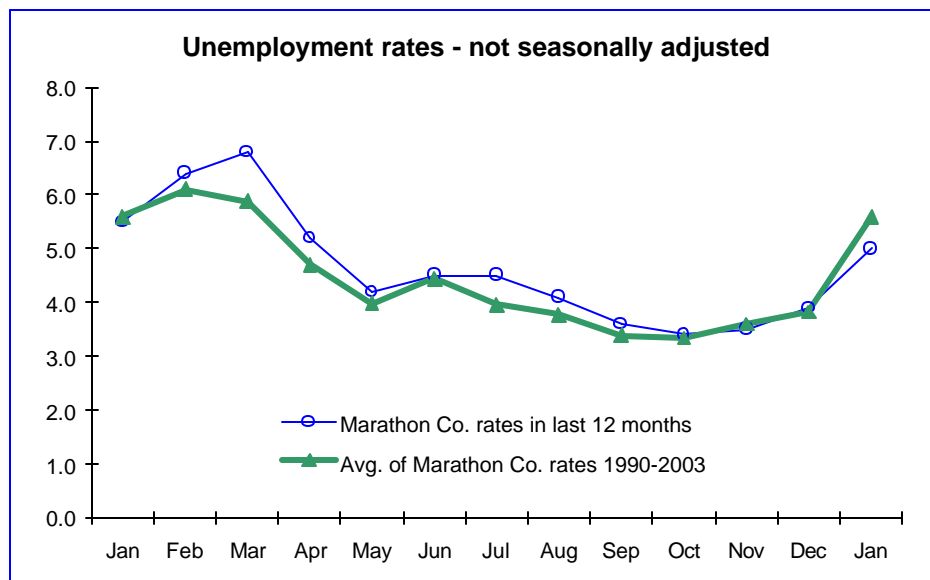
The unemployment rate in **Lincoln County** climbed slightly faster than usual, leaving it further above its typical monthly level than it had been last month. Since last April, each month has seen 20 to 40 fewer transportation, warehousing & utilities jobs than the same month a year before, and January was no exception.

Marathon County's unemployment rate rose more slowly than it usually does in January. Last January and November, it was 0.1 percent below the level typical for the month in question, January's rate was an encouraging 0.4 percent below the typical January level, but the trend needs a few more months to solidify itself. Just last March, the rate was 0.9 percent its typical March level. For most of February through October, the 2003 construction employment estimates were lower than their 2002 counterparts, but January 2004 was the third month where they were higher than year-ago figures.

In **Oneida County** in January, the unemployment rate rose almost as quickly as it usually does, so the rate remained almost as high above its typical level as it had been in December. Except June and July, the unemployment rate seemed to be drifting toward typical levels from January to November of last year. The construction sector's summer job growth was slightly slower in 2003 than in 2002, but construction job losses are much milder this winter than last.

Since August, **Portage County** has seen its unemployment rate slowly drift closer to typical levels. (The August rate was 0.7 percent above typical and the January rate was 0.2 percent above typical.)

With the exception of less hiring in the summer of 2003 than in the summer of 2002, the manufacturing sector's seasonality over the last twelve months seems to follow the previous twelve months' seasonality fairly closely. The previous twelve months saw a decline in manufacturing, and this January saw 11 percent fewer



manufacturing jobs than last January. Although retail & wholesale trade employment is declining a bit faster than it did last year at this time, the autumn run-up was steeper, so the last 12 months still look better than the previous 12 months.

At 0.9 percent above its typical unemployment rate, **Vilas County**'s January rate nearly matched its September and November rates (0.8 percent above typical) for closest-to-normal. The construction sector continues to follow last year's seasonal patterns very closely, while information, professional, business & other services saw a much flatter trend year this year than last and saw fewer jobs this January than last.

Except for last May, **Wood County** has not been this close to its typical monthly unemployment rate at any point in the last year. Each of the last two years (2002 and 2003) has ended with fewer manufacturing jobs than it started. January of 2004 does not show signs of reversing that trend or accelerating it. For much of 2003, the retail & wholesale trade sector saw 20-60 jobs fewer than it had seen in the same months of 2002. The January 2004 figure is about 180 below its 2003 counterpart, reflecting a decrease of roughly 2.8 percent.

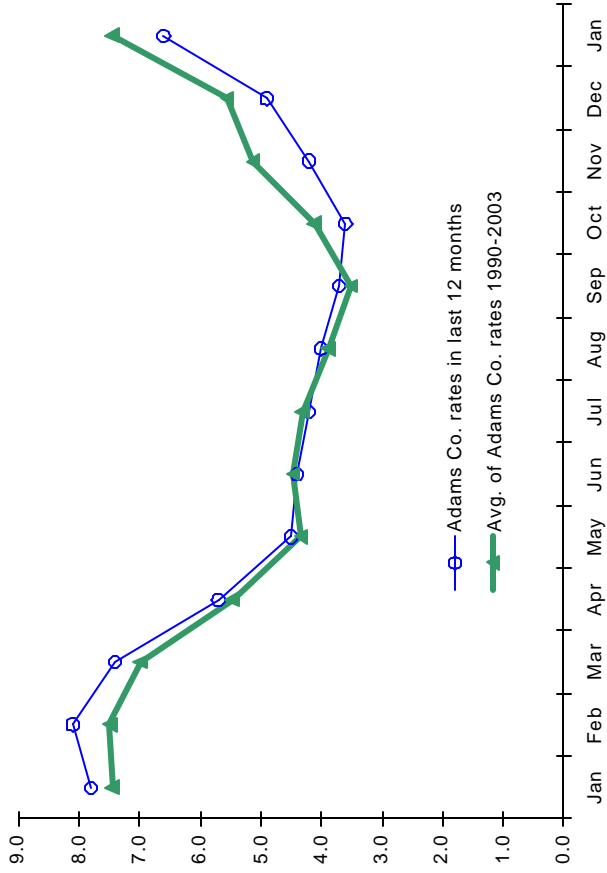
Employment by industry estimates - not seasonally adjusted															
	Wisconsin		Adams		Forest		Langlade		Lincoln						
	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change					
Total jobs, all industries*	2,734,100	-59,800	23,600	-40	3,300	-130	-20	3,500	-20	20	11,700	-340	-160		
Const., min'g & nat. resources	115,600	-9,900	3,800	30	80	-20	10	130	-20	10	330	-50	-40		
Manufacturing	498,000	-3,400	-11,300	430	330	-10	-10	400	-20	-40	3,600	-110	-70		
Trade (wholesale & retail)	431,500	-15,100	6,000	470	300	-10	0	680	0	30	1,720	-80	0		
Transport, Wrhsng, Utilities	105,600	-2,600	2,800	130	150	0	-10	170	-10	-10	360	-50	-30		
Financial activities	159,800	-300	5,500	90	100	0	0	210	20	0	770	-10	0		
Education & health services	371,500	-2,400	11,700	460	390	20	10	300	10	20	950	-10	0		
Leisure & hospitality	234,900	-2,100	9,300	400	170	-50	10	210	-10	0	950	-20	10		
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	417,100	-6,200	0	360	170	-40	-10	300	-20	10	1,010	-10	30		
Government	400,100	-17,800	-4,200	1,190	1,580	-40	-20	1,110	20	10	2,000	0	-70		
Civilian Labor Force**	3,086,000	20,900	60,200	8,100	5,000	-40	60	9,700	10	-240	15,100	190	50		
Employed	2,902,300	-13,000	78,700	7,600	4,600	-90	110	8,800	-90	-90	13,900	-100	150		
Unemployed	183,700	33,800	-18,500	530	400	60	-50	890	100	-160	1,200	290	-100		
Unemployment rate (%)	6.0	1.1	-0.7	6.6	7.9	1.2	-1.1	9.2	1.0	-1.4	8.0	1.9	-0.7		
	Marathon		Oneida		Portage		Vilas		Wood						
	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change	Jan 2004	1-month change					
Total jobs, all industries*	68,700	-1,300	500	17,000	-590	-50	32,900	-1,350	1,110	7,400	-400	-210	43,400	-1,230	290
Const., min'g & nat. resources	2,500	-200	300	980	-120	70	870	-160	50	700	-110	20	1,470	-180	20
Manufacturing	17,600	0	0	1,370	-10	-110	4,600	-230	-590	400	-30	-40	7,200	-180	-400
Trade (wholesale & retail)	13,900	-700	-200	3,800	-70	90	5,700	-590	460	1,290	-60	30	6,200	-940	-180
Transport, Wrhsng, Utilities	2,900	0	200	430	-40	-10	1,870	-50	-50	110	-10	0	3,200	-10	50
Financial activities	4,800	0	0	550	0	10	3,900	60	-80	390	-10	50	1,190	30	50
Education & health services	7,200	0	400	3,100	-30	-30	3,300	30	220	770	0	50	11,300	150	520
Leisure & hospitality	4,800	0	-100	2,000	-20	40	3,100	-60	160	1,170	-30	-270	2,700	-80	140
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	7,100	-100	-200	2,200	-130	-10	3,800	-70	170	530	-90	-30	4,900	80	90
Government	7,900	-300	100	2,500	-180	-100	5,800	-280	780	2,100	-70	-30	5,400	-110	10
Civilian Labor Force**	78,200	1,120	2,200	21,100	-50	-110	39,900	-80	1,970	11,400	-20	-30	42,300	450	840
Employed	74,200	200	2,400	19,400	-360	230	37,600	-760	2,100	10,400	-200	120	39,300	-310	1,160
Unemployed	3,900	930	-220	1,690	310	-340	2,300	670	-130	1,000	180	-150	3,000	750	-320
Unemployment rate (%)	5.0	1.1	-0.5	8.0	1.4	-1.6	5.8	1.7	-0.6	8.8	1.6	-1.3	7.0	1.7	-0.9

Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers = 2,000 are rounded to nearest 100; numbers < 2,000 rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers; results rounded.

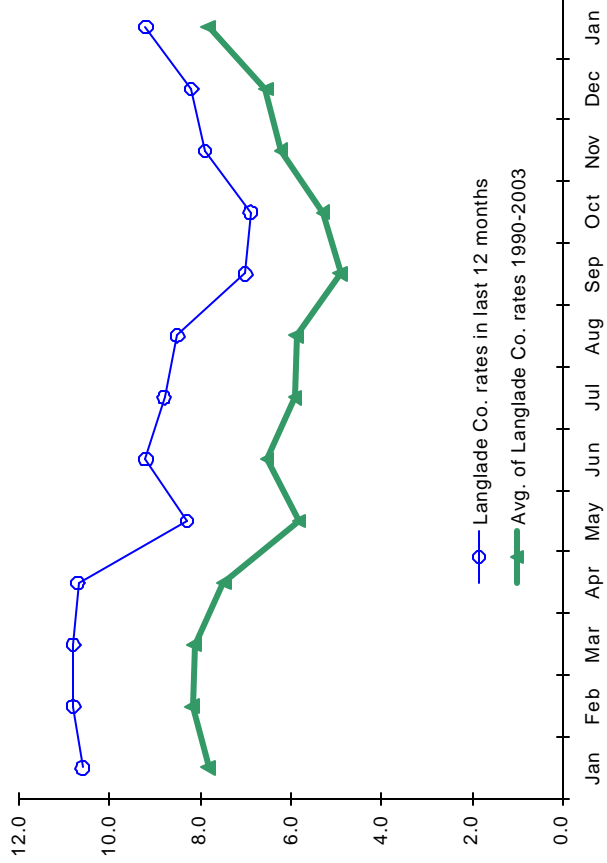
*Includes jobs with employers in area. ** Includes labor force participants residing in area.

For more information call (608) 242-4885; email dan.barrollnet@dwd.state.wi.us, or see <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/fmi>.

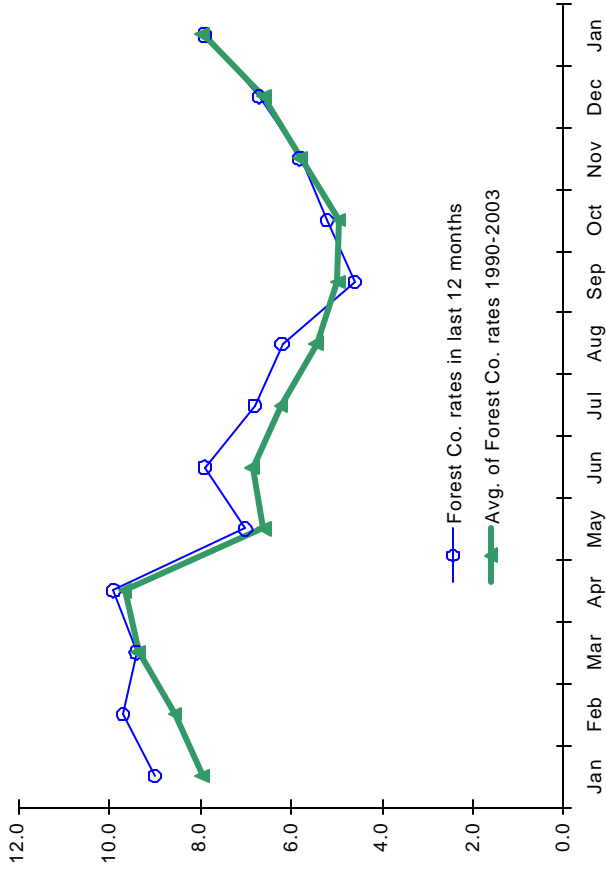
Unemployment rates - not seasonally adjusted



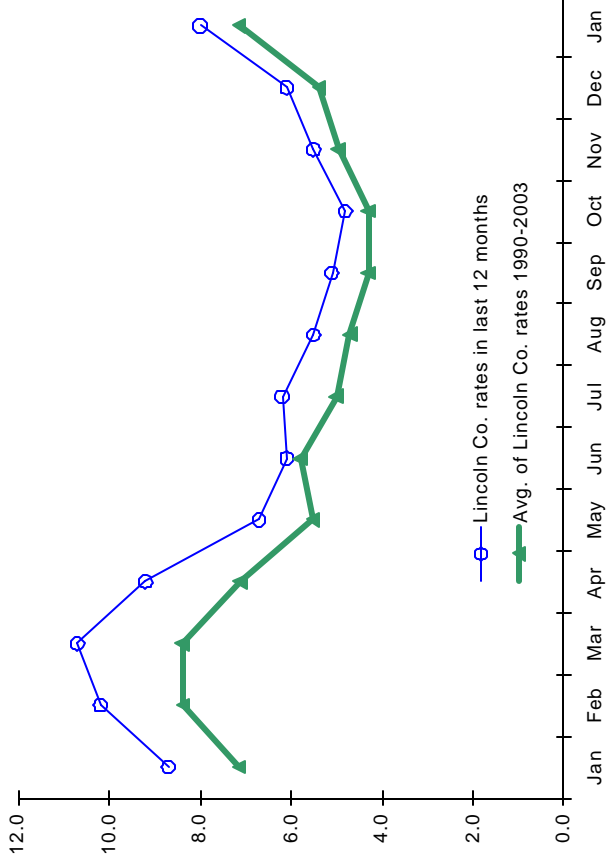
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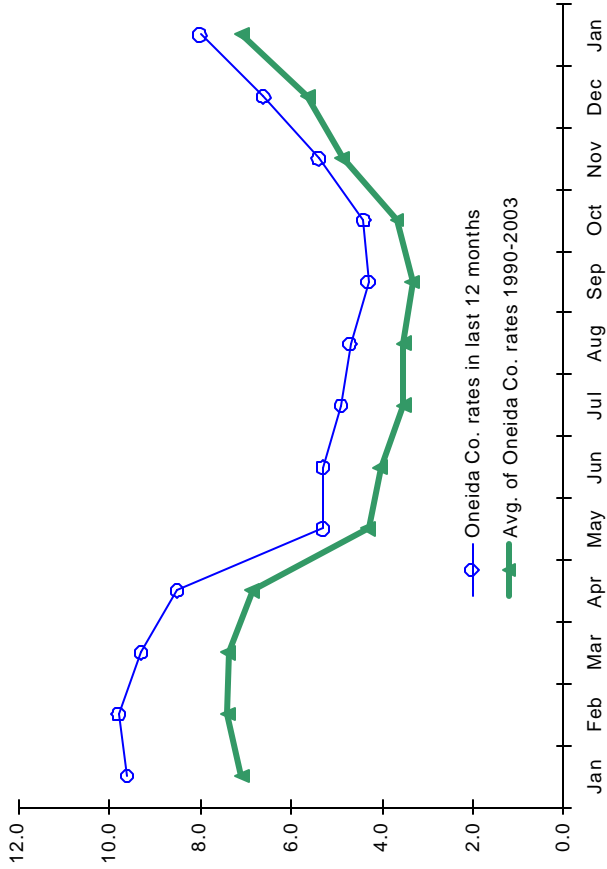
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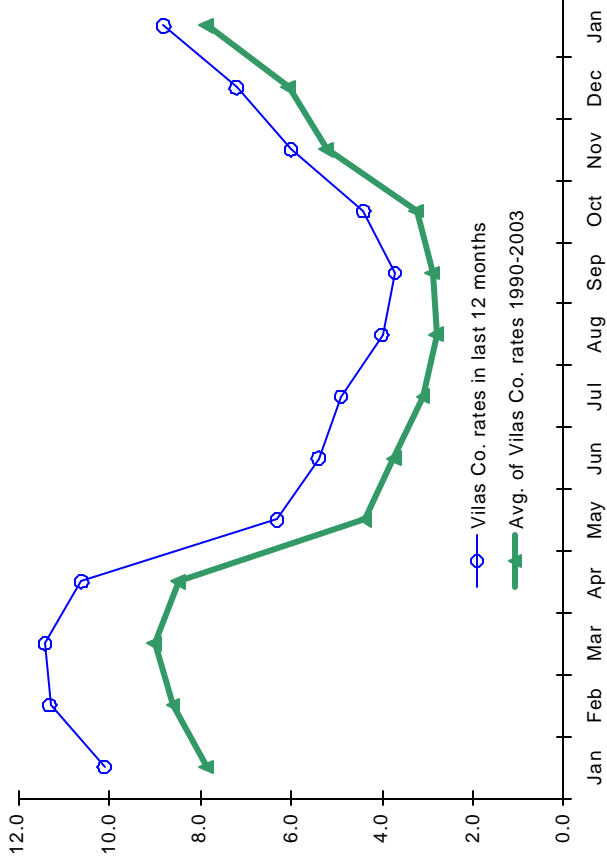
Unemployment rates - not seasonally adjusted



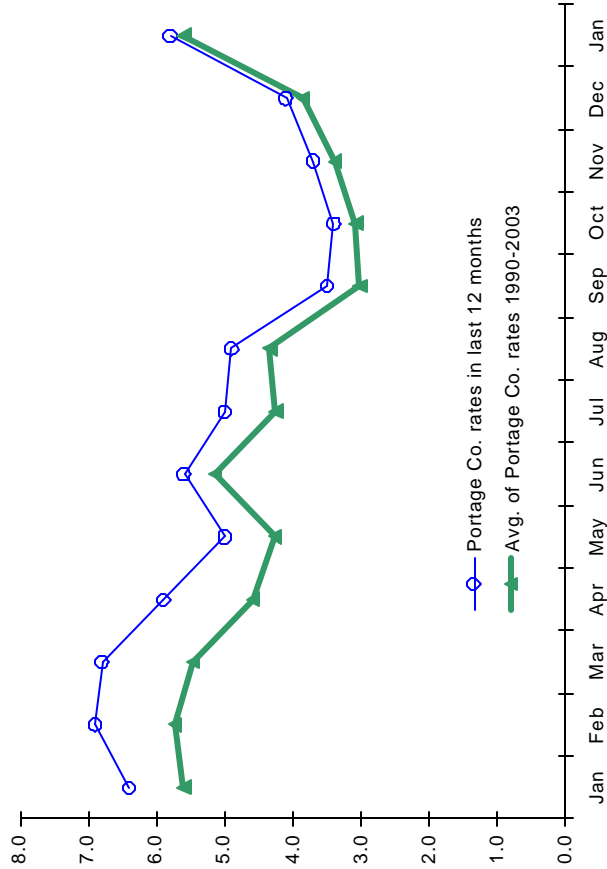
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